

# CITY OF WILMINGTON NORTH CAROLINA

City of Wilmington Public Information Report

Spring 2009  
Volume 6 Number 2

## CAMPS!

### Spring Break and Summer Camps

Beginning March 2  
910 341-7866

### Basketball Camp (Parent /Child)

April 3, 6 - 8 pm  
April 4, 9 am - noon  
910 341-7866

## Inside this Issue:

- Budget Update
- Fire and Police graduates
- Convention Center Update
- Lakeside Sidewalks
- New Fire Video

## Special Insert:

- Annexation Answers
- Benefits of Annexation
- Sales Tax Distribution

## Got a minute?

Let us know what you think about the newsletter and what you'd like for us to include in future issues.

Call or email:  
910-341-0833  
newsletter@wilmingtonnc.gov

www.wilmingtonnc.gov

## Neighborhood policing gets a big boost

Earlier this month, the city opened its Southeast Division Headquarters at 2451 South College Road. This facility allows the WPD to quickly respond to calls in the southern and eastern parts of the city and enables WPD officers to meet and interact more with citizens that live in surrounding neighborhoods. Officers spend at least an hour every shift walking in one of six policing districts in the city.

"The opening of the new Southeast Division Headquarters complements the department's geographic-based policing efforts. Officers that work in the southeast portions of the city will now also be neighbors with the citizens they serve," said Police Chief Ralph Evangelous.

"Citizens will have the ability to obtain all the police services with the convenience of being close to their homes. We look forward to developing a closer partnership with those we serve in the years ahead," he said. The geographical policing initiative started city-wide last year and is seeing favorable results.



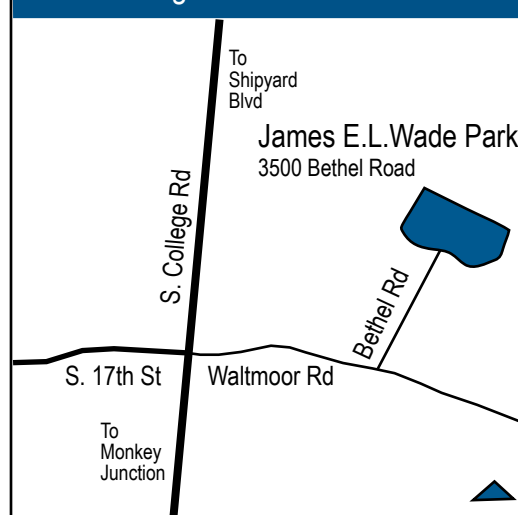
### Wilmington Police Southeast Division Headquarters

The Southeast Division Headquarters is a full service facility that services the eastern and southern areas of the city.

- 10,500 square feet
- 70 employees
- Staffed office hours Monday-Friday 8-5pm
- 24-hour lobby with surveillance and direct phone line to WPD Headquarters on Bess Street

2451 S College Road  
Wilmington NC 28412  
910.341.0111

## How to get to Wade Park?



## City opens new park

J.E.L. Wade Park, the city's newest park, opened in January. The park is located off Waltmoor Drive at 3500 Bethel Road and has several amenities, including a 1/2-mile multi-use path, a playground, picnic shelter and benches.

A stormwater wetland located within the park has two primary purposes: to filter and help clean stormwater before it runs into the Hewlett's Creek watershed and to reduce flooding in the area. The wetlands removes pollutants from stormwater runoff for 10 percent of the Hewlett's Creek watershed, making it the largest stormwater wetland in the area.

The \$650,000 park is named for former mayor and community activist James E.L. Wade.



Lake Avenue sidewalk project

## Sidewalks for Schools

The city continues to move forward with new sidewalk construction focused in areas of greatest need. The latest sidewalk project is on Lake Avenue, providing a connection between sidewalks along 41st Street and Roland-Grise Middle School.

It serves neighborhoods such as Lincoln Forest and Victoria Place by providing students with a safe path to Roland-Grise before and after school each day. Most of this project is already complete and in use. When completely finished, the \$125,000 project will include approximately 2,000 feet of new sidewalk, a new crosswalk, and a pedestrian refuge island in the center of Lake Avenue. The island gives pedestrians crossing the street a safe place to wait until traffic clears. The project is expected to be complete by the end of March.

Prior to installation, children going to and from Roland-Grise had to walk on the very edge of the street or in the street, and had to cross a street with a significant amount of traffic.

Funding for the project comes from the Transportation Bond approved by voters in 2006. While many areas of the city need sidewalks, priority is placed on linking major sections of existing sidewalks and serving areas that are near schools, hospitals and assistant living facilities.

## City welcomes public safety graduates

The Police Department welcomed nine new officers into their ranks at a swearing-in ceremony on February 6. The officers completed 16 weeks of Basic Law Enforcement Training (BLET) and will now undergo 16 more weeks of training in the field under the guidance and supervision of a Training Officer and a Sergeant.



New police officers graduate



New firefighters graduate

The Fire Department also welcomed nine new firefighters on February 7. They each completed 656 hours of training, during the 18-week academy, achieving state certifications for Emergency Medical Technician, Firefighter II, Rescue Technician and Hazardous Materials Operations. They are also state certified in shipboard firefighting, becoming some of the only firefighters in the state who have achieved that certification.

## Fire Department featured in new video

*Ever wondered what it's like to be a firefighter? Let's find out.*

The city has produced a 20-minute video that shows all aspects of firefighting, from tactical rescues, to dive teams to fire suppression, to highlight all the various aspects of modern firefighting. It's definitely not just about fighting fires anymore.

The video can be seen at any time on the city's website in the online video section at [wilmingtonnc.gov](http://wilmingtonnc.gov).





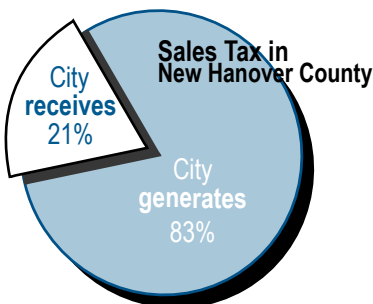
## City continues to face budget shortfall

The city continues to struggle with a budget shortfall that has grown to at least \$6 million for this year, and has also begun to develop a budget for next year that is expected to face even greater shortfalls. The shortfall is caused largely by dropping sales and property tax revenues.

The city has already taken steps to reduce this year's budget by 8.6% and is now developing recommendations for next year's budget, which will be finalized by the City Council in June. City Manager Sterling Cheatham says the continuing economic downturn will mean difficult choices for next year's budget.

### Budget fast facts:

- While Wilmington's property tax rate is the lowest of North Carolina cities with population of 50,000 or more, the city relies on property taxes for 60% of its revenue.
- The city also relies on sales tax revenue for another 20% of its revenue. More than 80% of all taxable sales take place inside the city limits, but the city only receives about 21% of that revenue.



- A continued decline in sales tax, no growth in property taxes, and expected cuts in state funding means the city will face steep reductions in next year's budget.

## Convention Center making progress

There is now visible progress being made at the site of the Wilmington Convention Center. Additional foundation pilings are being installed, and the steel framework for the building is rising up from the ground.

When completed, the center will be the largest convention center on the North Carolina coast. The center is being built on a 9-acre riverfront site on Nutt Street and is expected to be completed in 2010.

The convention center will serve as an economic catalyst for the northern downtown riverfront and the southeast region, not only creating new jobs and increasing the city's tax base, but also attracting new businesses.

Follow the construction progress by viewing a live video feed the city's website at [wilmingtonnc.gov](http://wilmingtonnc.gov).



Convention Center beginning to take shape

### A few convention center facts:

- The center is funded by a 3 percent hotel room tax, not property taxes dollars;
- The center is currently the area's largest construction project;
- Construction of the center currently employs 75-100 people;
- After the steelwork is complete, 200-500 workers will be required to finish the project, depending on each phase of construction.



New James E.L. Wade Park signs installed

## What is a wetland?

James E.L. Wade Park, which opened in January, is located within a 12-acre constructed wetland. The wetland, designed to help improve the water quality in Hewlett's Creek and reduce flooding in the area, provides treatment of stormwater runoff for about 590 acres, easily making this the largest stormwater wetland in the area.

Wetlands are areas where the soil is always wet or frequently wet enough to grow plants that are adapted to wet soil conditions. North Carolina wetlands include swamps, carolina bays, pocosins and marshes. Wetlands provide many benefits such as filtering polluted stormwater runoff, preventing flooding, protecting shorelines from erosion, recharging groundwater, and providing recreational opportunities. Wetlands also serve as critical habitats for birds, fish and wildlife. In fact, wetlands are so biologically diverse that many species depend on wetlands for their survival.

Unfortunately, naturally-occurring wetlands have disappeared due to growth and development. Man-made or constructed stormwater wetlands, such as the Wade Park wetland, are installed in urban areas to mimic the natural functions of wetlands that have been lost.

For a free presentation, call or email [Jennifer.Butler@wilmingtonnc.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Butler@wilmingtonnc.gov)

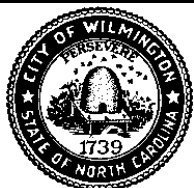


**Stormwater Services**  
343-4777



City of Wilmington  
P.O. Box 1810  
102 N. Third Street  
Wilmington, NC 28402

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Public Information Report

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Information  
Report is  
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### Wilmington City Council

Mayor and City Council ..... 341-7815  
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Jim Quinn, Mayor Pro-Tem  
Margaret Haynes  
Laura W. Padgett  
Earl Sheridan, Ph.D.  
Ronald W. Sparks, P.E.  
Kristi A. Tomey

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**City Manager** ..... 341-7810  
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**Editor** ..... 341-0061  
Malissa Talbert

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**The Public Information Report** is published by the  
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Contact us at: 910-341-0833 or send an email to:  
newsletter@wilmingtonnc.gov or mail us:  
Communications Office, P.O. Box 1810,  
Wilmington, NC 28402-1810

**Looking forward to hearing from you!**

### The city on the web

www.wilmingtonnc.gov

### General Information Phone Numbers

Citizen Services Information ..... 341-7800  
Emergency ..... 911  
Police/Non-Emergency ..... 343-3600  
Fire/Non-Emergency ..... 341-7846  
Parks and Recreation ..... 341-7855  
Parks Hotline ..... 341-7852  
Street Maintenance ..... 341-7879  
Parking ..... 762-5678  
Zoning ..... 254-0900  
Trash pickup/Recycling ..... 341-7875  
Stormwater ..... 341-4646  
Cape Fear Public Utility Authority ..... 332-6550  
Code Enforcement ..... 341-3266

### City Council Meetings

City Council meetings are generally held on the  
first and third Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m.  
and are open to the public. There is time for public  
information at each Council meeting; interested  
persons can sign up to speak for up to five minutes  
by filling out a form at the City Clerk's Office located  
in City Hall. Requests will be taken until noon the day  
before the meeting. Meetings are held in City Council  
Chambers, located on the second floor of City Hall at  
102 N. Third Street. Agendas for upcoming meetings  
are posted on the city web site at  
**www.wilmingtonnc.gov**

### City Council Meetings on GTV8

Council meetings are broadcast live on GTV8,  
the City Channel on Timewarner Cable. Council  
meetings are replayed at 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. on  
Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, the week of the  
meeting, as well as 11:30 p.m. the following week.

### This Week From City Hall

You can catch a summary of City events and  
activities on GTV8's "This Week From City Hall,"  
airing twice daily at 10 a.m. and 8 p.m., beginning  
the Friday evening after every Council meeting. For  
questions about programming on GTV8, contact  
Station Manager Dylan Lee at 341-4675.

### GTV8 online

City Council meetings, Planning Commission  
meetings, "This Week From City Hall," and all  
other GTV8 programming can be found on the  
City's website, live or on-demand. From the front  
page, simply click on "online videos." Then, select  
the program you want to watch. If you are looking  
for a particular Council meeting agenda item, you  
can select the item from a drop-down menu after  
choosing your desired meeting date. You can also  
do a keyword search for the item. Windows Media  
Player version 9 or higher is required.

Look for the  for information